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To: David C. Childs A-76comments/OMB/EOP@EOP  
cc:  
Subject: A-76 comments

December 19, 2002

Dear Office of Management and Budget:

I am writing as an individual.

I am opposed to the contracting out of federal jobs, particularly in the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and the USDA Forest Service. I urge you to extend the comment period so the public can learn more about how the A-76 process will affect public services.

For example, almost everyone in the federal service has collateral duties. They don't just do one job in a narrowly defined field. Take firefighting for example. Many firefighting overhead teams and firefighters themselves do other jobs the rest of the year. This is a very efficient use of personnel. Similar to a militia or National Guard, only called to service when needed.

Also, many small communities in the west depend on the federal employees for a percentage of the commerce and livelihood of the area. To contract out the work by centralizing very specific tasks from far away supervisory centers, disenfranchises the taxpayers and the business people of the small communities.

The government is very efficient considering all the different mandates and laws that they must follow. To bundle jobs with contractors into narrow categories creates inefficiencies and added expense. Let me give you an example. A trail crew maintaining a trail on federal lands is a federal representative to the recreationists they meet. They don't just maintain the trail. They pick up litter, install signs, report back to management on current conditions, provide an administrative presence including law enforcement, and provide information to visitors about the area. They probably have been working in the area for several seasons and are experts on the lay of the land. A contract trail crew could consist of out of state, green-carded workers from another country who do not even speak the language of the taxpayers they serve.

Claims by contractors for changes in specifications or job tasks could lead to increase costs to the taxpayers that would be hidden by any analysis of government efficiency.

I urge you to reconsider the contracting out of more federal jobs. We already have the smallest federal workforce since the Kennedy administration of 1961. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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